

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00765 181605Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-12 TRSE-00
OMB-01 /086 W

-----059977 181611Z /45

O R 181418Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7120
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 765

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, SF
SUBJ: DEFENSE MINISTER ATTACKS US

1. IN COURSE OF THE DEBATE ON THE DEFENSE BUDGET YESTERDAY,
APRIL 17, DEFENSE MINISTER P.W. BOTHA ACCUSED THE US
OF "LEAVING SOUTH AFRICA IN THE LURCH" IN THE ANGOLAN
CAMPAIGN. BOTHA SAID THE US HAD "DROPPED SOUTH AFRICA WHEN
A WORD WAS BORKEN". HE CLAIMED THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAD
CROSSED THE ANGOLAN BORDER IN 1975 WITH US "KNOWLEDGE"
AND "ENCOURAGEMENT".

2. BOTHA'S REMRKS CAME IN THE COURSE OF HIS ATTACK ON THE
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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00765 181605Z

UN ARMS EMBARGO RESOLUTION WHICH HE SAID WAS BASED ON THE
FALSE PREMISE THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAD COMMITTED
"PERSISTENT ACTS OF AGGRESSION AGAINST NEIGHBORING
STATES". BOTHA SAID THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAD "ACTED
WITH THEIR (US) ENCOURAGEMENT AND WHEN WE WERE ALMOST
AT THE CLIMAX, THE RECKLESSLY LEFT US IN THE LURCH".

3. IN A SUBSEQUENT PRESS INTERVIEW, HARRY SCHWARZ, OPPOSITION CHIEF SPOKESMAN ON DEFENSE, SAID THAT SINCE THE MINISTER "HAS GONE THIS FAR, HE IS OBLIGED TO TELL US WHAT THE COMMITMENT WAS AND HE CAN'T LEAVE IT HERE. THE OTHER IMPLICATION, SCHWARZ SAID, " IS THAT IF THERE WAS A SECRET UNDERSTANDING, WHY HAS HE CHOSEN TO MAKE IT PUBLIC NOW OR AT ALL".

4. COMMENT: BOTHA'S DISCUSSION OF THE 1975 ANGOLAN EVENTS FOLLOW A NUMBER OF STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTER AND OTHER SAG OFFICIALS UNDERSCORING THE UNRELIABILITY OF THE WEST AND THE NEED FOR SOUTH AFRICA TO BE MILITARILY SELF SUFFICIENT. AT THE SAME TIME, BOTHA'S ACCOUNT OF THE ANGOLAN ADVENTURES COULD BE SEEN AS RELEVANT TO THE SAG'S CURRENT CONSIDERATION OF THE NAMIBIAN PROPOSALS. THE MINISTER'S REMARKS COULD SUPPORT THOSE WHO ADVOCATE REJECTION OF THE PROPOSALS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE WEST CANNOT BE RELIED UPON TO REACT IN ANY WAY SHOULD SWAPO, WITH CUBAN SUPPORT, ATTEMPT TO OVERRUN NAMIBIA IF THE AGREEMENT IS ACCEPTED AND SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS WITHDRAW. BOWDLER

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